MARTHA TAPY

An Interview Conducted by

Jim Wright

April 10, 1981

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NARRATOR DATA SHEET

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MARTHA TAPY

Tape 1

April 10, 1981

At Mrs. Tapy's residence--314 N. 21st St., Terre Haute, IN INTERVIEWER: Jim Wright

TRANSCRIBER: Kathleen M. Skelly

For; Vigo County Public Library Oral History Project

CYCPL 1981

JW: This is April 10, 1981. We are with Martha Tapy talking about the history of some of the churches here in Terre Haute.

> Martha, what's your first memory of being in church here in the city? Can you describe that for us?

I can't remember when I didn't go to church, TAPY: really. I was taken there when I /was a baby7. have a little Bible that I was given when I belonged to the cradle roll department when I was 24 years old. And (laughs) I don't remember that, of course, but it just gradually went on and I've always gone there. I remember when I joined the church. I was only /5 years old then, but I remember that well 7. I just can't remember any time that I didn't /go to church. I am still a member of the First United Methodist Church, and I am now 74 years old7.

And that church was /formerly the First United JW: Brethren church?

TAPY: That's right. And it was the second building /erected on that corner/. The first building was an old /wooden / frame building /and was / right in the middle of a cornfield. /It was built in 1866.7

JW: At 14th and Chestnut.

/Yes, 7 at 14th and Chestnut, /southeast corner/right where the building /stands/ now. /When/ that /building/ became too small, they built this /second/brick building. They had to buy an extra lot there TAPY: /to have enough room for it/.

JW: Do you know when the brick building was built at 14th and Chestnut?

TAPY: I can tell you, I think, if you give me just a minute here.

JW: I'll give you all the time you need.

O.K. I can tell you that. /Tt was built in 1892 under the pastorate of Rev. J. O. Connet.7

Reverend Nugent was the first pastor.

JW:

How do you spell his name?

TAPY:

N-u-g-e-n-t. Now, he wasn't a full time pastor.

The first church was organized with just a little group of people who met part time in a schoolhouse; part time in a machine shop. And the man who really organized that class (it was not really a church) was Reverend Nugent. He was put in charge of the work there, and he held preaching services at the home of a man called Captain Anderson, who lived on South 3rd Street. And then at the next session of the conference six months later Terre Haute was made a mission station, and Reverend Moore was appointed pastor. Now, he /too/ didn't really have any /church organization/ but he did carry on /with/ this /group/ for a while.

Then in 1865, Reverend Givens of Centerpoint was appointed to the charge, and he organized the first real church of /16/ members, /and they continued to meet in the schoolhouse/.

JW:

This was /the/ United Brethren church.

TAPY:

/Yes, 7 the United Brethren church. And he held his preaching services in a little schoolhouse, which my grandfather tells me is still there. /It is 7 that little white building between 14th and 15th /Streets 7. It looks like a schoolhouse, but that was the first /church according to the records that I have read 7.

JW:

On what street?

TAPY:

On Chestnut /1469 Chestnut Street/ between 14th and 15th. And if you notice, there is a little white house there that looks like a schoolhouse.

JW:

Sure.

TAPY:

And he has told me that is the /very place/

where the church was started, the first church. However, the lady who owns the house says there is nothing in the abstract about that, but maybe they didn't have abstracts at that time for schools. But he's told me that was definitely /the place/ -- just a half a block from where the church is now. And in the spring of 1866 where the first church is now, there at 14th and Chestnut, the lot was purchased for \$500; and it was lying in a cornfield. And in less than two years there was a little frame church built there. And it faced 14th Street on the west, and the cost of the lot and the building altogether was \$1700.

And this continued to be the church home until it was replaced by the /larger/ brick building in 1892 /under pastorate of Rev. J. B. Connett/.

JW: So, that building there is 1892?

TAPY: No, not this one. This is the third one.

JW: O.K.

TAPY: The one that's there now.

JW: So, a brick building in 1892?

TAPY:

A brick building, yes. And the first church /building/ that was there was sold, and it was moved about a block away north and west. Now, this is according to the autobiography my grandfather's written and also /according to/ the church history of the United Brethren Church. /Exactly/ where that /building/ is I can't tell you, but it is still there and it was converted into a dwelling house /and is still being used/.

Then, for quite a while the growth of the church was very slow. And it was out there in the cornfield, and it was 'way out in the suburbs, really. And the kids /big boys/ liked to come, go 'round the church, yell in the windows, and cause a lot of distraction /during the services/. And, of course, it was not very substantial /strong/ at the time. But anyhow, in 1885 they decided that they needed a /full time/ pastor who would live there /on the charge/. Up until this time it had been made just a missionary station hooked onto another church. And maybe the preacher would /only get to preach once or twice a month/.

JW: What do you mean by "missionary station"?

TAPY: Well, the church was paying most of the . . .
I mean the denomination was paying most of the expenses /for the church/.

JW: It wasn't self-sustaining?

TAPY: That's correct. And it was not able to be on its own, so they just hooked it on to a circuit that was already established. Well, of course, that didn't work too well, and so in 1885 they decided that they needed a full time pastor to live right there. And that's when my grandfather came. /He was the first resident pastor/.

JW: And his name?

TAPY: Reverend W. R. Muncie, m-u-n-c-i-e.

Now, he was a schoolteacher /before he began to preach/ and the pay /preacher's/ was so small In fact, the first year he was there his salary . . . the board voted to give him \$150 a year. So, of course, he had to do some other things, too /to make some money/. But he was a schoolteacher; and there were some complications getting out of the school system, and so on, that he didn't start until . . . in January that year /1884/. But then he was /assigned/ there /for/ another year after /that/.

JW: In what year?

TAPY: Eighteen /hundred/ eighty-four.

JW: O.K.

TAPY:

And then he did stay another year after that

[1884 and 1885]. And then his health . . . or his
wife's health broke. That's quite an ordeal to live
right on the charge, you know; and /they moved back
to their home in Middlebury, Indiana.

JW: A little later I want to talk about your grandfather and some of the other things he did in the city, but I want right now to ask you . . . so three buildings have been at 14th and Chestnut. TAPY: /Yes,7 three. Now, the reason the third one was built was because of a fire, /In fact/ two fires. They were a year apart. /This building was dedicated Jan. 1, 1919.7

The first one was /March, 19177. We've always kidded Reverend Blake. He was the pastor there /then/, and it /the fire/ started right in the pulpit both times. And we said it was because of his fiery preaching. But the first one was /not so bad, and the building was able to be repaired/.

JW: Reverend Blake. What was his first name?

TAPY: L. O. /Lawrence7.

JW: And he preached there how long ago?

TAPY: Let's see.

JW: A ballpark figure, you don't have to have the exact date.

TAPY: Well, I would say . . . oh, I can't tell you just exactly, but it was when I was about 15 years old. I'm 76 now. Figure it up (laughs). /about 1912 to 19217

JW: O.K. We're talking about /The early '20s.

TAPY: About that, yes.

JW: O.K.

TAPY: It was a little bit earlier than that, because it was during the war, and it was hard to get material to rebuild. But the first one, they were able to salvage it /the building/. And then the next year it burned so badly that there was just no way to rebuild it.

JW: What year was that that it burned?

TAPY: Well, I think it was 1918 / T917 and the new church was dedicated Jan. 5, 19197.

JW: O.K.

TAPY: It was during the war.

JW: O.K. That's good enough.

TAPY: And everybody discouraged us /from/ trying to rebuild because it was so hard to get materials and everything. But Mr. W. E. Williams was the head /president/ of Braden Manufacturing Co. at that time.

JW: What manufacturing company?

TAPY: Braden, it's on North 14th Street /about the 400 block on east side of street/. It's not called that now, and it's only been sold in the last few years.

JW: What'd they make at Braden?

TAPY: Oh, sheet metal and roofing . . . big metal things. And he /Mr. Williams/ was the president of the board of trustees /of the church also/. So through him they were able to get the materials, although it was very high /expensive/ during wartime.

JW: So, we have now the present structure from that?

TAPY: That's the third / Duilding, yes 7.

JW: From that benefactor and the people working together?

TAPY: Right. But in the meantime when the church burned the second time it took so long, you see, /for/ they had to tear the /old/ church down. And the church /congregation/ went to this little Kent Avenue church over here on Sycamore and Kent Avenue and held services in the afternoon.

JW: Sycamore and Kent Avenue?

TAPY: Right over here.

JW: Could that be Chestnut? Kent Avenue and Chestnut?

TAPY: Yes, I guess it is /Chestnut7.

JW: Right. Chestnut and Kent.

TAPY: That's right. It was an Evangelical church and they offered their building to us. We had meetings

in the afternoon. But it didn't work out very well. People were going to other churches in the morning, you know, and in the evening, and they just didn't /come to our services in the afternoon and/ the congregation was just kind of slipping away. So, right on the corner of 14th and Chestnut across from our church on the northeast corner where that big house is now -- there where Dr. /Henry R./ Vandivier used to live years ago . . .

JW:

Dr. who?

TAPY:

Vandiver -- V-a-n-d-i-v-e-r. That was an empty lot there, and our church built a tabernacle / there/out of wood. And it had a sawdust floor, and we've got pictures of it if you're interested to see it. But that served the purpose quite well, holding the congregation together. We heated with stoves, and I've thought so many times how dangerous that was with the wood stove and those sawdust chips on the floor (laughs) but we had no problem.

JW:

But that was an interim thing until the structure was built.

TAPY:

Until the other church was built, um hm. And then that was torn down afterwards.

Can you remember guest preachers coming into the city? Preachers who were well-known nationally or maybe regionally? Who was . . .

TAPY:

I can remember two. Anybody that I talk to doesn't remember it, but one was a Dr. Lyons. And he had a /large following/. It was a city-wide evangelistic service. And it was in a building it seems to me, about where the Firestone /store/ is there by the railroad, right close to the railroad.

JW:

On Wabash Avenue?

TAPY:

On Wabash Avenue. It seems to me . . .

JW:

It's near 10th Street?

TAPY:

Yes, right there close.

JW:

O.K.

And it was quite a big affair. He was a well-known man. I wasn't too old. I can't give you the date of that /for I was only about 8 yrs. old/. And one of the things that I can remember so well /is that/ they organized the children. . . oh, every-body, but especially the children. And we met down at the courthouse, and we paraded down Wabash Avenue going to the church /meeting/. Well, of course, there were a lot of saloons then; and they were open Sunday and all, you know. And as we approached the saloons (the keepers were all outside, of course, watching), we had a chant that they had taught us /which went like this/: "Down with booze, down with booze, we want money, we want shoes." And that's always stayed with me.

And I remember one place we went /past/. The bartender came out; and he said, "Well, come on in. We'll give you shoes and food, everything." (laughs) But I can remember that one quite well, and it was /about 1914/. I wasn't too old then.

Then I can remember when (I think it was about 1923) we had a meeting by Dr. Bulgin (b-u-1-g-i-n), which was also a city-wide /meeting/. And that was held in a tent right about where the Ponderosa /steak house/ is now. That was /a vacant lot on the southwest corner of 23rd and Wabash/.

So, I was about 16 years old; it was about 1923. Anyhow, by that time I was a young girl; and, oh, we all were in love with the choir director. He was a young man (laughing); I can remember that. But it was a very successful meeting.

JW:

That's interesting that you would march from the courthouse to the meeting place to emphasize the fact that you were interested in /people being changed.

TAPY:

We did. Our parents did, so, of course, we did. But I'll never forget that (laughing) crazy slogan and chant we were doing.

Then in recent years, of course, there was Bill Glass and Leighton Ford, of course, was a later one.

JW:

Um hm, číty-wide, yes.

TAPY: City-wide. That's what you meant, wasn't it?

More than just our own church?

JW: Yes.

TAPY: /Those are/ the only ones that I can remember

very distinctly.

JW: Describe for me the typical preaching at First

Church 60 years ago, 65 years ago. What was the preaching like on a Sunday morning or a Wednesday evening? I assume you had Wednesday evening ser-

vices.

TAPY: Right.

JW: And a Sunday evening service?

TAPY: Right.

JW: What was it like?

TAPY: Hell-fire and damnation. It was very emotional.

A lot of "a-men's" and all that. But I can remember especially Reverend Blake. He would get so excited that he would jump right over the /chancel/ railing around in the church there, and then he'd have to walk back and start all over again, you know. But he was a great guy. He was a great preacher. His daughters and I are about the same age, and we were very close friends. But I can remember that very well. We had a very fine male chorus in our church. Our church was so crowded you had standing room /only, at times/. But at night we had at our services . . . we always had this male chorus I think once a month. And it really brought in a big crowd,

But the preaching was quite demonstrative.

JW: Strong.

too.

TAPY: Strong.

JW: Um hm. Did you have an altar call usually at

every service?

TAPY: Always, and /we7 usually had results. And the

thing that I could remember, everybody was praying

at once. You couldn't understand anybody, and

everybody was praying. But, of course, I guess God could understand it. But you don't hear that . . . you don't hear much about repentance any more or any . . . You know, you just have to say I'm going to change, and that's all there is to it.

But it was /a great time to be alive, and I would not take anything for the heritage that I have had in the /church /.

JW:

Just how much ecumenism was there in the '20s, or even before, that you can remember when you were active in the church? Did churches work together much in city-wide campaigns?

TAPY:

Yes, they did. Now, like these I /have mentioned/. But the thing that I can remember most /vividly/ was always their Thanksgiving service. Even way back then all the churches would have a union Thanksgiving service every year /on Thanksgiving morning/. And it was very well attended. I am not sure of how much the Catholics were in that, but all these other denominations did unite and it was very good. But as far as the other churches working together, I think they did but . . except for the Catholics.

Now, I can remember living next door to a lady who was a Catholic, and she was a very fine /woman/. That's when I was a little girl. I can remember my mother invited her to go to /our/ church with her /to/ a special service one time; and she /the lady/ threw up her hands and said, "Oh, no! God'd strike me dead if I'd go inside of that church!" So, of course . . . And you know I was almost brought up that way. If you weren't a United Brethren, you just weren't right, you know. But yet they /our church/ did cooperate but still their own church was it. (laughs)

JW:

Well, today in the city of Terre Haute we have mainline denominational churches, some somewhat liberal; we have evangelical churches that would support, let's say, Bill Glass or Leighton Ford. But then we have a lot of what people would describe as fundamentalist churches that are separatists and wouldn't participate in any ecumenical city-wide revival. Were there groups that were even more conservative than First Church when you were a child,

JW:

that wouldn't participate in any city-wide revival service with some of the people you've mentioned?

TAPY:

Probably so, but I am not familiar with them. I was strictly brought up (laughing) in my own church, you know; and I couldn't tell you /about/ that. But I know that a lot of the denominations now /work together in union services (even Catholic)/. Like I've told you about our revivals. We just had them, of course, all the time and that's all I knew.

JW:

Speaking of revivals, how has revivalism changed since you were a child? Has it changed much?

TAPY:

Oh, yes. Yes.

JW:

In what way?

TAPY:

Well now, for instance last year our church had a /family retreat/. /We/ went /over Labor Day week-end/ to Camp Illiana and just had a retreat. And that was our revival for that year. We had some good speakers but just for the weekend. There were no altar calls. But this year we are having a lay witness /crusade/ if you know what that is; and that will be, too, not like the old revival services, but /an inspirational meeting for 3 days/.

JW:

That could in part be the United Methodist influence.

TAPY:

Right.

JW:

. . . over the United Brethren because of the amalgamation ten years ago. But if you compared your revival services that you had, let's say down at 10th and Wabash in the war years -- the World War I years we're talking about - with a Leighton Ford crusade, how were they different?

TAPY:

Well, /in the Leighton Ford crusade, they gave the altar call, but there was no /loud demonstration. They didn't get down on their knees around the altar. There wasn't any altar in fact. But they did give them literature, and they took them in a private room where they would give them instructions. Now, for my part I like that, because I want to know what I'm doing. And, of course, I was brought up the other way; and I think we need some sort of revivals, definitely.

TAPY: But I am one of these /who/ cannot accept anything without knowing how or why or what. If a doctor gives me a pill, I want to know what it's for and why. And I like that, where you go into a room and they explain what it's all about, give you some literature and /tell you how God changes your life if you meet His conditions/.

JW: Was there much explaining in 1918 when you had your revivals?

TAPY: Yes. There was. I don't know about 'way back then, but I know later we had some wonderful revivals. We had a regular team of . . . I don't know what they called them, but they'd /counselors/ take them into a little room and explain what was going on, too. I think there's a happy medium.

JW: When you were a child in church, did the kids have songs of their own to sing? And what were some of them?

TAPY: Oh, sure. (chuckles) "Jesus Loves Me," and . . . oh, we learned the names of the disciples by singing you know . . .

JW: Can you remember that one? The words to it?

TAPY: Let's see. (singing) "Jesus called them one by one, Peter, Andrew, James and John. Next came Philip, Thomas, too..." What's the next one? ... "Thaddeus and Bartholomew. Yes, Jesus loved them. Yes, Jesus loved them. Yes, Jesus called them ..." I can't remember the rest of it. But anyhow that's the way we learned it.

JW: We get the point.

TAPY: (laughs) That wasn't very good. (continues to laugh)

JW: Did the United Brethren Church have a youth fellowship similar to the Methodists and their MYF?

TAPY: /Yes. 7 They called it Christian Endeavor until they united with the Methodists. It was always Christian Endeavor. They had three groups. There was a junior and intermediate and a senior. In the junior, you stayed 'til you were, I think, /about/ 12 years old. And then intermediates /were/ from

TAPY: 12 to 16. And then you were a senior /after 16 years of age/. And we had some great times with that. /We had parties, Bible studies, boat rides, taffy pulls, hayrides, youth choirs, etc./

JW: How did people get to church when you were a kid?

TAPY:

Well, they mostly -- people who could afford them -- had a horse and buggy or a horse and wagon. They even came in horse and wagons. We always walked every place. And then later, of course, the street-cars ran, and we could get pretty close. But an awful lot of people here in the city walked. And I remember one time we got to go in somebody's sleigh (chuckles). /It belonged to/a neighbor of ours. It was snowing, you know. /Later on a few people had cars./ But anybody who had a car put it up for the winter. They never drove them in the winter. Did you know that?

JW: Um hm. I've heard that.

TAPY: They'd block them up. /They packed them up and put them on concrete blocks.

JW: Who'd take care of the horses while everybody was in church?

TAPY: That I can't tell you. I never had one. (both laugh)

JW: Describe the neighborhood surrounding First Church at 14th and Chestnut when you were a child. Lot of cornfields?

TAPY:

No. That was before my time. (chuckle) No, it was just a little neighborhood of small houses. /It was just very modest, nothing like those big houses around there now. It was just a nice neighborhood, and most everybody that went to church lived in the neighborhood. That isn't so now. They commute from clear over at Brazil; and people that have moved away /come from New Goshen, North Terre Haute and West Terre Haute/. It was a nice neighborhood then when I was a child.

JW: I understand your grandfather started other churches in the city. Can you tell us about your

JW: grandfather a little bit more?

TAPY: Do you want me to tell you about the churches

that he /organized/?

JW: Yes. Who sent him? Where was the home office?

TAPY: The conference /superintendent and the bishop7.

JW: Where was the Conference /office located?

TAPY: At that time I believe it was Dayton /Ohio/.
I'm not real sure about that. But that's where most
of the United Brethren offices were.

But anyhow, he was quite /an organizer. He was sent over here as what they called a missionary and he held a meeting down at . . . on South 2nd Street. There had been some women there who were quite interested in that particular part of the city because there was no church around there. And they'd gotten a group together. Also, the Salvation Army had come in and helped them out, but there was no organized church. And he held a /revival/ meeting /in a hall on South 2nd/ and organized a church which is now the Breden Memorial Church.

JW: On South 7th.

TAPY: On South . . . yes. But the first one was South

3rd.

JW: Near Voorhees /Street7.

TAPY: Right.

But the first one was on South 3rd /Street7 and they built a little building there then, and, of course, he was just a missionary. He didn't stay very long. He was an interim pastor. /I think he finished out the year there/

JW: About what year was this? What decade?

TAPY: Oh, it was in . . . I think it was in the 1800s.

JW: Um hm. It would have been after the Civil War.

TAPY: Oh, yes!

JW: Maybe 1870s?

TAPY: Think it was a little later than, that.

JW: Eighteen-eighties maybe? /18957

You say Breden Memorial was first set up on South 3rd Street; do you know about where on South 3rd?

TAPY: Third and Morton, I believe.

JW: Third and Morton.

TAPY: And their first pastor was Reverend Breden and his wife was also a preacher. And they stayed there for, oh, for many, many years until he was not able to preach anymore. He became very ill. So his wife took over there, and they stayed until he died, and she /went to/ live at the Otterbein Home, which was the United Brethren /Benevolent/ Home. That was near Dayton, Ohio -- Lebanon, Ohio.

JW: Spell Otterbein for me.

TAPY: 0-t-t-e-r-b-e-i-n.

JW: So your grandfather founded that church and then handed it over to Mr. Breden, Reverend Breden.

TAPY: That's right.

JW: What did your grandfather do then?

TAPY: Then he went up to a location he called Highland Park, which is up there near, well, where Barbour Avenue is now.

JW: That would be about Lafayette and . . .

TAPY: Thirteenth and . . . / T4th and Barbour Ave7.

JW: Twelve Points area.

TAPY: Yes. Up a little farther.

And he held a revival up there, and there were a

TAPY: few people interested in starting a church. And so in /1896/ a church was organized there /with 7 members -- one man and six women/. He organized the church /in June/, but he was not the preacher. /In July he was sent to another church. He went on, see, and the preacher was Rev. Brandenburg. /He held a revival meeting and increased the membership to 30. For many years it was known only as 3rd Church.

JW: /Rev. / Brandenburg was the preacher at Barbour Avenue?

TAPY: Um hm. His name was Leo Tibberty Craig Brandenburg. (laughs) But I'll never forget it. He was a friend of my granddad's.

JW: Tibberty?

TAPY: Tibberty, I don't know how you spell that. (laughs)

JW: We'll do our best.

So, then your grandfather moved on after starting that church?

TAPY: He did. And he started Briley Chapel.

JW: Briley?

TAPY: South of the city here, down near Lewis. Also, $\sqrt{a}t^7$ Lewis, $\sqrt{I}nd.$, he started a United Brethren church 7.

JW: How do you spell that?

TAPY:

B-r-1-l-e-y. And he organized the church and built the church /building/ at Clay City, /Ind.7. So, he's built a lot of these little churches, but then he was an organizer and then they would move him on /after the church got going well/.

JW: I want to ask you a question or two about . . . Brandenburg out on Maple Avenue was United Brethren, right?

TAPY: Right. $/\overline{I}t$ is now called New Hope United Methodis \underline{t} .

JW: I suppose it was named after the /Rev./

JW: Brandenburg who started Barbour Avenue or rather was the first pastor there.

Of course, Breden was United Brethren. First Church at 14th and Chestnut was United Brethren. What about Kent Avenue? You said it was the evangelical church which eventually amalgamated with United Brethren. When did the United Brethren and the Evangelical get together?

TAPY: That was November 16, 1946, when they became the Evangelical United Brethren Church.

JW: Were they a lot alike?

TAPY: Yes, they were very much alike. Um hm.

Otterbein was the founder of the United Brethren Church, and I don't remember the name of the other one. But they had an awful lot in common -- the way they were started and /also their doctrine/. Albright was the other one from Kent Avenue, Albright.

JW: He was the founder of that church?

TAPY: Founder fof the evangelical denomination.

JW: Albright.

TAPY: Uh huh. And William Otterbein /was the U.B. /founder/.

JW: Uh huh.

TAPY: They were very much alike.

JW: Well, was Otterbein church on South 25th Street (which is now a Pentecostal church) . . . was that Evangelical or was that United Brethren?

TAPY:
That was United Brethren. The First Church when Reverend Todd was here became interested in that community, because there were no churches around there at all. And Reverend Todd took about six or seven of us from the church. I was about 15 years old. My mother went, and there were, well, I expect about seven besides him. Every Sunday afternoon we went out there /canvassing in the community/. At first we took a survey to see if anybody was interested in /organizing/ the church, and they were. It was amazing.

And so we started a little church on Sunday afternoon in a little abandoned store. And when we outgrew that, why then they had to do something else. So, they built a tabernacle right there where the church is /now/ to hold the . . .

JW:

Twenty-fifth Street and I belive it's Park. I'm not positive.

TAPY:

I think you're right though.

Well, anyhow . . . that's close enough. So, they worshiped in that tabernacle then for quite some time, and the congregation grew quite large. And so then they . . . I think they bought the lot next door to that where they could put up a church.

And after the church was built then /In 1927... we had always gone out there, our church, and helped them, you know. We were the officers and so on and so forth. And after it was built /at a cost of \$30,0007 they wanted to take over themselves /and be a self supporting church/ which is the way it should have been. And they had their own Sunday School superintendent, and they had their own pastor. It was Reverend E. A. Struble.

JW:

Spell that for me.

TAPY:

S-t-r-u-b-1-e. Now, that was in 1927 when that present building was started.

JW:

When was Brandenburg out on Maple Avenue built, /the building/ which is now New Hope Methodist? When was that built out on Maple Avenue?

TAPY:

/The present building was built in 1929. The church was organized by Rev. Brandenburg in 1924.

JW:

And Barbour Avenue was built earlier, wasn't it?

TAPY:

Barbour Avenue was 1896.

JW:

Uh huh.

TAPY:

See, that's an old one, too.

JW:

Kent Avenue was an Evangelical Church built . . .

JW: do you know when Kent Avenue was built? I know that's United Brethren, I think, information.

TAPY: Nineteen /hundred/ eleven. /Rev. E. W. Praetorius was the pastor./

JW: Nineteen /hundred/ eleven.

Were there other Evangelical churches in town when the amalgamation took place?

TAPY: There was this Locust Street church which is at 7th and Locust. I think they call it /Grace/now.

JW: Right.

TAPY: And that one was built in 1880; that is, not that building but the old one.

JW: The old structure.

TAPY: Eighteen /hundred/ eighty. Reverend /John Fox/ was assigned to that church. /In 1894 this church became a United Brethren Church. / And the present building was erected in 1950 under the pastorate of Reverend /J. W./ Davis. It cost \$103,000.

JW: Right.

First Church has a gymnasium, and I know this is an addition. I suppose that annex was built, what, maybe 30, 40 years ago?

TAPY: Now, that is not a gymnasium. That's Sunday school rooms over there.

JW: I swear I used to throw baskets in that room.

TAPY: Well, that was in the basement /before that unit was built/.

JW: 0.K. That's it. 0.K. So, the church was built with a /gym/; well, why?

TAPY: Well, for one reason they used it for a Sunday school room on Sunday. On Sunday morning that was the primary department, and it was so crowded that

they just had classes in each corner, you know. But they did use it also for a gymnasium, because they needed something to keep the young people -- to hold them. And it did . . . the women . . . or the girls would line up against the walls and watch the fellows shoot basketball, you know. But it is in the basement of the church.

JW:

Now, I want to ask you a question. This is a little sensitive, but I think we can deal with it. Was there an unspoken rule in the past that blacks were to worship in their churches and whites in theirs? Has this changed. If so, when and what's it like now? I'm talking about 65 years ago.

TAPY:

I don't . . . we have never had any blacks, and I suppose that that was true.

Now, you mentioned one time the Ku Klux Klan. As a church we . . . they did not approve of the Ku Klux Klan at all. But there were a lot of church members who were members of that Ku Klux Klan. And I suppose that you would say that there was an unspoken request.

I can remember one time not too many years ago . . . I believe Reverend Stone was here. I believe he was. When the call was given for anybody that wanted to join the church, a colored lady came down to the altar. She was visiting that day. I had never seen her before; and there was a lot of commotion, people getting out of the door, you know /in a hurry after the service was over. But we came to find out she was not mentally alert and didn't really want to join the church as far as that goes. But our mail carrier /at the church is a colored man. He visits quite often, and we like /him. I don't think there's any problem there now, but there was /perhaps years ago.

JW:

It was different times.

TAPY:

Different times, I think /that's true/.

JW:

You say the church . . . when you were a young girl, the church disapproved of the Klan, and yet some members /belonged/.

TAPY:

Well, there were some members, I know. (both laugh)

J₩;

I imagine that was true in a lot of churches.

TAPY: Yes. The church as a whole, see, disapproved; but then I know some of them were /members/.

JW: Can you . . . what role did the First Church and other churches you're familiar with in Terre Haute take during the war years of '17-'18 and also during World War II to aid service men?

TAPY: You know, I can't tell you very much about that except our own church. I was in charge of the service flags. And whenever anyone, of course, went away to the service, why, I would see that another star was put on the flag.

And then every week we would select one service man to write him letters and encourage him and just let him know we were back of him and all that sort of thing. But, you know, we weren't too close to service men, really, that I can . . . I don't know of anything that we definitely did in the church.

JW: Can you remember troop trains coming through town with hungry soldiers?

TAPY: Yes.

JW: What was that like? Describe that.

TAPY: Well, it was sad. Of course, I have seen a lot of our boys go away, too, and, you know, telling everybody good-bye and all. And yet they were . . . the troops were glad to have somebody to /talk to/. I suppose we gave them some sandwiches or something, because we were always down there /when a train went through/. I just don't remember that, but probably we did.

JW: Did United Brethren ministers stay long at one spot?

TAPY: Our church is noted for keeping their preachers a long time. Reverend Stone was here, I believe, 14 years . . . 15 years. /Rev. Wm. Todd was here 15 years./

JW: In other words, the United Brethren Church wasn't quite like the /United/ Methodist church. The Methodist church sent them around every three or four years.

MARTHA TAPY Tape 1

TAPY:

The /United7 Methodist church now, six years is supposed to be their limit. And the conference superintendents can only /serve/ six years before they're moved on. There are advantages and disadvantages to it. You get so attached to your preacher; then when he leaves, why the church falls apart a lot of times, when he's been there a long time.

JW: Has the theology in First Church changed since you were a child?

I don't know if it's changed in the church, but TAPY: it's changed with the preachers some. (laughs)

JW: How's that?

Quite liberal. Much more liberal than I was always brought up. And there're . . . I'm not complaining. I mean I'm going along with them, but there are some things. I would rather /have the old TAPY: U. B. way 7.

JW: What are some of the liberal ideas that . . .

Well, I think that not in our church I don't TAPY: know of any, but I think they don't disapprove of social drinking. I know our church does but as a denomination . . . and then, of course, we were always taught that dancing was terrible and a lot of /other/ things that I was brought up on. /My family and church were very strict/ Now I'm trying to become a little broadminded (laughs), but I do think they are more liberal in /the United Methodist than in the United Brethren7.

What about on issues other than cultural? What JW: about on the basic tenets of the faith, the resurrected Christ, the Bible's inspired word of God, has it changed?

No. No. It's the same. TAPY:

.7W : Well, that's good.

> What was the old world connection of most of the United Brethren parishioners? Where were they from? I bet it was Germany.

TAPY. Of the U.B.'s? Yes, I'm pretty sure that it was. (laughs) I would say yes, German.

JW: German pietism.

TAPY. I would guess that you're right on that.

JW: How did the average parishioner feel about the union with the Methodist church when it took place?

TAPY:

Well, I was thrilled, but I didn't realize it's so different that . . . Now, the old Methodist church and the United Brethren church were almost the same. But the United Methodist church is a little different, their doctrines and so forth. And I prefer the old way, the old United Brethren. But then, you know, we didn't have any say on it. It was just /done/; it was never brought to a vote in the congregation /locally/. It was the delegates you know /to the General Conference who voted on it/.

JW: It came from on high, huh?

TAPY: Uh huh.

JW: What were some of the changes? I mean, what were some of the differences? You say you prefer the old United Brethren way of doing things.

TAPY: Their offices are so overlapping. They are so overly organized that nobody knows what they're supposed to do, really. They're just terribly organized. And it's so big! The Methodist church is so big. It's big business, and you just don't know anybody, and it's just not /the same friendly group that a smaller one can be/.

JW: Has your church in the past backed efforts to rid the city of prostitution?

TAPY: Oh, yes. (laughs) They got rid of one place there at 13th and Wabash one time. They're back again, but then they did for a while. They really made it rough on them. They had to move out.

JW: Was this a house of prostitution or a . . .

TAPY: No, that was \sqrt{a} house of pornography7.

JW: A bookstore.

TAPY: Bookstore. The other I don't know.

JW: What about prostitution though? When you were younger, I'm sure you realized there was a red light district. Well, did the pastors preach against this?

TAPY: Yes, they did. They did. I can remember that very well. If you see a red light in the window, that's . . . right down along the river, you know, lst and 2nd Street. /You knew that was a "bad" house.

JW: Was their preaching effective? I mean would they have any crusades in the city to try to do something about it?

TAPY: I don't know of anything. Really, I can't remember of anywhere it was attacked /openly/.

JW: And you've already mentioned pornography. What effort has your church made?

TAPY: Well, we've worked hard . . . a lot on that.

There was a store on /the corner of/ 13th and Chestnut at one time -- not too many years ago, too -- where they were selling it. And, oh, our church and other churches around there really went together /made it so hot for them/, and they moved. They had to leave. Now, I don't know where they went when they went out of business, but anyhow they had to get out of there.

JW: When you went together, what'd you do?

TAPY: I don't know whether they went to the /chief of police or the mayor/. There was just a delegation that went . . . whether they went to the officials of the city or how it was. But anyhow they were too close to the church, you see, and they had to leave.

END OF SIDE 1

TAPE 1-SIDE 2

JW: What about gambling? Same thing? Has your church been opposed to gambling?

TAPY: Yes, all the way.

JW:

Asbury Chapel, an old Methodist church torn down in 1919. Do you remember it?

TAPY:

I don't remember a thing about that. The only thing I found out . . . I tried to find out a little bit /more/ about it. It was the original First Methodist church there at 7th and Poplar, wasn't it? Um hm.

JW:

Um hm. In World War II, Farmers' Chapel from south of town and Breden Memorial on South 7th united, didn't they? How did that work?

TAPY:

Well, according to the book here that I have that I got from one of the ladies down there at the church, Breden had built a new church. They had been quite prosperous before and during the war before this /depression/ thing happened. And when this bad time came, they were not able to pay for the church. And they went to the bank, and finally the bankers let them pay just the interest. But the officials had to even take out loans on their own homes, some of them. Well, it so happened . . . now all it says here is that Farmers' Chapel church down on 1st Street (you know where it is, don't you?) was forced to close their church. The government closed it. Now, why, I can't find that out. It's not in any of these histories.

So they, the congregation of Farmers' Chapel, joined the Breden Evangelical United Methodist church. \(\frac{Then}{I} \) it was U.B. And in so doing they brought enough money with them from their church to pay off the debt. And they paid off with their help to \$33,000.

JW:

Then, after the war, the Farmers' Chapel went back to being its own entity, right?

TAPY:

I didn't know that it did.

JW:

Oh, really?

TAPY:

That's an independent church over there now.

JW:

Oh, really? Could it have been the fact that that was . . . wasn't that an ordinance area down there by Pfizer?

TAPY: We wondered if that was the reason.

JW: And that they were going to use that, and they had to kind of use . . .

TAPY: I believe you might be right about that, but we had never found out just why. But they said the government closed it.

JW: I think that was it.

TAPY: But I don't believe that ever went back to a Methodist church. But it is independent now.

JW: I want to throw out a name to you, a Dr. William Hickman. He was pastor of Trinity Methodist, a former chancellor of DePauw and a Prohibition candidate for the United States Senate. And I think he pastored Trinity up until about 1918. Do you ever hear that name anywhere?

TAPY I heard the name, but I didn't know him.

JW: Uh huh. One of the more prominent clerics here in town. I caught that in my research.

What was the church's position on temperance, your church's position on temperance during Prohibition?

TAPY: Well, they were very strict against it. I mean they were very strict against drinking anyway. As far as Prohibition, well, they approved of it. They thought it was fine. It was . . .

JW: How . . . was preaching from the pulpit done against drinking?

TAPY: Reverend Todd, especially (laughs). Yes.

JW: What would he say about drinking?

TAPY: Oh, he just . . . he was very much opposed to it and just told us what he thought about it. A Christian would not drink.

JW: Now, I assume your church today, is that still . . .

TAPY: As far as I know. We have had several Methodist

TAPY: preachers who had never been United Brethren or any thing. I'm not quite sure of where they stand. Oh, I'm sure they don't believe in drinking, but I really don't know. They're a little bit more liberal.

JW: What about the Women's Christian Temperance Union? I know there's been some women active in that here in the city. Has it been a strong force in your church and in the city?

TAPY: It has. One of the ladies in our church is very active in it. She's a real old lady, and she's been in it ever since, I think, 1954. And it's not a very strong organization. What I mean is, there are not very many members now. But they're still working hard. And she told me . . . do you remember anything about Donn Roberts, the mayor, and his conviction and so forth? It was due to the efforts of the W.C.T.U. that he was exposed and convicted. There were three women who were very active (I know two of them). One was Stella Stimpson. She was a state treasurer. one was Amelia Meyer, who was a great /and7 well-known organist in the city. And one was Mrs. Anna Robinson Black, who was an educator and everything else /very brilliant7. I knew both of them quite well. And that . . . it /Roberts' conviction was because of the efforts of these two or three women. They just wouldn't let him rest, and they just kept prying into it. And, I suppose, /it was because they went to the proper officials that he was exposed and convicted. So, that's one thing.

JW: That's interesting.

TAPY: I thought it was, too.

JW: These women were doing this because they were connected with the W.C.T.U. But also it was corrupt politics they were after.

TAPY: That's true. Now, this lady (I think you should have her name) is Mrs. Rueben Norton. And she is still so worked up with it and works so hard at distributing literature and all. But she said twenty years ago she went to the public library and looked up the newspaper clippings on this ordeal about Donn Roberts. And she said there was such a stack of them, even then. She said I suppose they moved them, I hope they did. (laughs) That's what she said.

But she said she has distributed literature on the scientific temperance material since 1954 in the schools even. Now the schools will not allow her to bring it in. But through a friend of hers who works in one of the schools' administrative offices, she takes it in. She's allowed to bring it in, but no one else can do it. So, they still are getting this . . .

JW:

So the schools used to allow the W.C.T.U. to come in and talk about the evils of "Demon Rum"?

TAPY:

Well, they . . . I don't know if they could talk about it, but they could put their literature in there.

JW:

But no more?

TAPY:

That's what she told me.

JW:

How do you spell Stimpson?

TAPY:

S-t-i-m-p-s-o-n.

JW:

O.K.

TAPY:

She also told me that there were 72 countries in the world who belong to this organization, and in 1983 the worldwide convention will be someplace in the United States.

JW:

Now how do you spell Meyer?

TAPY:

M-e-y-e-r.

JW:

0.K.

Women in the pulpit, was it done in the United Brethren Church?

TAPY:

Yes, we've always had women in the pulpit.

JW:

Can you recall some women pastors?

TAPY:

Yes. Miss Elizabeth Chappelle was one.

JW:

Spell her name.

TAPY:

C-h a-p-p-e-1-1 e. I remember her very well.

And, of course, this Mrs. Breden from . . . you know . . . that was down at Breden church was also a minister. Oh, there've been . . . I could have

TAPY: given you a lot of those names if I'd gotten . . .

JW: Why do you suppose the United Brethren church had women in the pulpit many years ago?

TAPY: I don't know. (laughs) I suppose that they felt like they had just as much right if they were called, and they felt /they were able to do as good a job as the men/.

JW: What's interesting is that, you know, the United Brethren Church was conservative in their theology and conservative on cultural issues and no smoking and I suppose . . . I mean no drinking and I suppose no . . . Did they approve of smoking?

TAPY: No, they really didn't. In the discipline I think it was there. Of course, I know some of them did. Some of the preachers do.

This ol' Daddy Brandenburg even chewed tobacco and smoked, you know, (laughs). He said, I believe it was, "Well, you can get to heaven if you chew, but you might have to go to hell to spit." (laughs) My grandma used to tell me that.

I don't know why they did unless they just felt like that was /God's will for their lives/.

JW: But they didn't have problems apparently with \(\subseteq \text{St.7 Paul's talking about women's place in the church.} \)

TAPY: No.

JW: O.K. Because that's a hot issue today, you know, in Evangelical . . .

TAPY: I know. I know it is . . . in just some of the churches, not our denomination. And the Methodist /church/ has had them before, too. And we have quite a few of them now. We have two here in the city.

JW: How would a woman in the pulpit differ from a man? I mean, preaching style similar? I mean, would she really pound away?

TAPY: The ones that I knew didn't. They were very conservative. We have some that I . . . well, the one out here at Trinity Church is a little louder that way than /some I have heard/. She's a United

TAPY: Methodist.

JW: Debra Thurston?

TAPY: Debbie. /Have/ you ever heard her?

JW: Uh huh.

TAPY: She's good! She was at our church yesterday and . . . But she's loud.

Then there's another one out here at Seelyville, and she's very soft and quiet and sweet. They're both lovely girls, but they're different.

JW:

During the Depression what did area churches do -ones that you were familiar with -- to help those who
were really in trouble, desperate straits? Did you
have any kind of relief for the people who were out
of work?

TAPY:

I know that they bought coal for people, and I know that they took up donations of food and would distribute it, and I know some girls who had absolutely not enough clothes -- teenagers and all -- to go to school. The Ladies' Aid would make dresses for them and that sort of thing. They helped a lot. They did /a good job7.

JW: Do you remember that 1916 fire at Centenary Methodist?

TAPY: I don't think I do. I've thought about that so much, and I can't find anybody else that can remember that. See, I wasn't too old; I was just 10 years old. But I sure can remember /the fire at/ St. Benedict's!

JW: O.K. Tell me about St. Benedict's, the dome that was lost. Describe that scene.

TAPY: They were painting the dome, and they had some blow torches up there to take /the paint off/. They were just going around taking one little section at a time. And they were blowing the paint off in one certain section, and it caught on fire.

And we were all alerted, of course. There were no televisions or anything, but we soon heard it by newspaper extras and all that sort of thing. And we all ran down there and watched it. It was a terrible

TAPY: blaze! It was really something. I'll never for get it. Ever.

JW: Nineteen / hundred / thirty.

TAPY: Um hm.

JW: The whole church burned, and they were able to redo the inside, keep the outside structure. But the dome was lost.

TAPY: That's right. Yes, that's right.

JW: Funerals. At one time were not most held in churches?

TAPY:

Absolutely. That's the only place unless they were at home. People who didn't go to church would just have them in their homes. But anybody who went to church would have them at the church. Never a funeral home. That was just never thought of.

But . . .

JW: What happened?

TAPY:

I don't know. Well, I didn't like them in the church. My father was buried from the church. And every time you went to church you saw that casket down there in the front. And they would have them . . . they'd usually bring them to your house /for the visitation and kept them there till time for the funeral at the church/. And all that visitation was in your home and you just hear that tramp, tramp of people in and out and in and out, you know. It's better this way, I think. /While the corpse was in the home it was the custom for someone to sit up all night with the corpse to prevent a cat from getting into the casket and mutilating the body/.

But they had the whole choir come and sing /instead of solos or duets/.

JW: Do you know approximately when the movement began to kind of have the services in funeral homes instead of churches for the most part?

TAPY: Well, let's see. My father's was in the church and that was about 40 years ago, so I suppose maybe 35 years /ago/.

JW: Probably after World War II.

TAPY: Yes. Probably then, uh huh.

JW: Any splits from First E.U.B. that resulted in a new church? Or have you been able to keep it together?

TAPY: No. We're fortunate. No splits.

JW: Vacation Bible school, is that something that's been set up in the last 30 years? Or does it go back to when you were a child?

TAPY: It started about 1916. My mother had the first one. It was just an experiment; they had never had one at the church, and she asked them if she could try. She worked with the children all the time anyhow, and it was quite a huge success. I imagine about 1916.

JW: What would you . . . do you know what your mother did with that first vacation Bible school?

TAPY: Oh, they had Bible stories, Bible lessons, Bible songs. Then they had a recreation period. They had some good times.

JW: Any lemonade and cookies?

TAPY: I don't think they did serve. (laughs) But, you know, you can't go to church any more without coffee or something /to eat/.

JW: That's right.

Vigo County Church Women United, do you know much about that?

TAPY: Um hm. I've got something on that for you, too.

Now this . . . Mrs. Sudbrink is the one /who/ gave me
this /information/. She is on the board, and she also
belongs to this St. Mark's church out here /on Fruitridge Ave/. She is a cousin of my husband.

JW: What's her first name?

TAPY: Josephine. Sudbrink.

It just so happens that this year the United Church Women are celebrating their 40th year. It was organized in 1941.

"The purpose was to encourage church women to come together in a visible community to witness to their faith in Jesus Christ and enable by the Holy Spirit to go out into every neighborhood and nation as instruments of reconciling love."

And then these are their goals. "We intend to grow in our faith and to expand our vision and what it means to be Christian. Women of faith in society today, we intend to develop as a visible ecumenical community. We intend to work for a just, peaceful and caring society. We intend to use the resources God has entrusted to us, our intelligence, time, energy, money, creatively and responsibly as we carry out the mission of Christ." We have invited all denominations, and there are 21 churches that are in it.

JW: So, the organ

So, the organization still [exists].

TAPY: Oh, yes, very active.

JW: Um hm. What kind of a thrust have they had in the city? I mean do they

TAPY: They sponsor these ecumenical things, these
Thanksgiving services, these Lenten services that
we just finished and . . . or will finish. And they
have the World Day of Prayer. They organize and have
that program. Just quite a lot of things where the
churches go together that way. But it's a very strong
organization.

JW: An early preacher who visited Terre Haute in 1825 said it was a very good town for business but no place for preaching.

What about Terre Haute in 1925? Was it a good place for preaching or did people . . . ?

TAPY: (laughing) They sure needed it! In 1925 . . .

I graduated from high school then. I think it was a fine place for preaching. You know in those days the church was your whole life. There /were/ not

TAPY: so many activities in school like there are now.

And we were just busy all the time. It was just great. All of our recreation and everything was at the church. Our friends were there and fellowship there. But the preaching . . I'm sure I would say, it was a good place.

JW: What kind of a relationship did the United Brethren churches have with the Catholic church 50 years ago? We've already talked about the fact the Catholics probably . . . and I know for a fact they didn't participate in the citywide revival services, of course. But what was the general feeling of . . .

TAPY: Well, the only time we ever went to a Catholic church was to a midnight Mass.

JW: But you did go!

TAPY: I did go occasionally. Everybody went to that /on Christmas Eve/.

JW: That's interesting.

TAPY: Yes. I don't know why. It's just the different, the awesome . . . it was a beautiful service.

JW: All these products of the Protestant Reformation would go to midnight Mass!

TAPY: (laughing) Right.

JW: Where'd you go -- St. Benedict's?

TAPY: That's where everybody liked to go.

JW: It's a beautiful church.

TAPY: It is a beautiful church.

JW: But generally people got along with Catholics, didn't they?

TAPY: Oh, we got along fine, but they just went to their church. And then it was all done in Latin, and we didn't know what was going on, where now it isn't, you know. I went to a Catholic funeral last week, and

TAPY: it was beautiful. Just fine /all in English and the congregation sang together.

JW: How did your preacher at First Church feel about Al Smith's candidacy in 1928 for President? Did he ever say anything from the pulpit about that?

TAPY: I don't remember of him ever saying anything. I sure can't tell you anything about that, because I don't remember.

JW: Well, the last question I've got is with the W.S.C.S. /Women's Society for Christian Service/ which is a Methodist organization. But are you familiar with it?

TAPY: Um hm. (laughing) I'm the president (both laugh) at our church.

JW: Well, were you connected in any way with the W.S.C.S. when you were United Brethren?

TAPY: I was. I was president. That was called . . . our missionary society we called that. Our Ladies' Aid, which was different . . . there were two organizations, see, where /with/ the Methodists it's all one. Methodist Woman's Society takes in all this working for others. Now, we have one group that makes baby layettes, for instance, /to take to/ the hospitals for pregnant girls who are unmarried or on welfare, you know, for them to take their baby home in. You'd be surprised how many go into the hospital with nothing to take the child home in. We have a group in our Women's Society who work making those things. They also make things for the County Homes and /are/ just busy all the time at that. Other groups do other things, but we're all one organization, where in the U.B. church there was the Ladies' Aid and the missionary societies.

JW: So, when you became Methodist then you were the Women's Society of Christian Service?

TAPY: Right.

JW: So you had your own organization at United Brethren, and they had theirs which was the W.S.C.S. and then when you came together, you went under the label of the Methodist organization.

TAPY: Mm hm.

JW:

Well, listen, I think we've just about covered it. I've asked you just about everything I wanted to.

That W.S.C.S. is outdated though. It's United Methodist Women now $\sqrt{U.M.N.}$. TAPY:

JW: Good.

(laughs) They changed that several years ago. TAPY:

JW: O.K. Thanks a lot.

END OF TAPE

INDEX

Asbury Chapel, 25 Barbour Avenue Church, 15-16, Black, Anna Robinson, 27 Blacks, 20 Blake, Reverend Lawrence O., Braden Manufacturing Co., 6 Brandenburg, Reverend Leo Tibberty, 16, 18, 29 Breden Memorial Church, 14-15, 17 Briley Chapel, 16 Catholic church, 10-11, 30-31, 34-35 Christian Endeavor, 12-13 Depression, 30 Ecumenism, 10-11 Ethnic group German, 22-23 Evangelical churches, 17-19 Evangelical United Brethren Church, 17 Farmers' Chapel, 25 Fire, St. Benedict's Church, 30-31 First United Brethren Church, 1-13, 19-24, 26-35 First United Methodist Church, 1, 11, 23-24, 26-29, 32, 35-36 Ford, Leighton, 11 Funerals, 31-32 Givens, Reverend, 2 Kent Avenue Church, 17-19 Ku Klux Klan, 20-21 Locust Street church, 19 Meyer, Amelia, 27 Moore, Reverend, 2 Muncie, Reverend W. R., 4, 13-16

New Hope United Methodist Church, 16, 18 Norton, Mrs. Rueben, 27-28 Nugent, Reverend, 2 Pornography, 23-24 Prohibition, 26 Prostitution, 23-24 Recreation, 33-34 Revivals, 7-9, 11-12 Roberts, Donn, 2 Salvation Army, 14 Stimpson, Stella, 27 Stone, Reverend, 20-21 Temperance, 26-28 3rd Church, 15-16 Todd, Reverend William, 17, 21, 26 Transportation, 13 United Brethren Churches, 1-36 United Methodist Church, 11 21-23 Vacation Bible School, 32 Vigo County Church Women United, 32-33 Williams, W. E., 6 Women pastors, 28-30 Women's Christian Temperance Union, 27-28 Women's Society for Christian Service, 35-36